

A SERMON

Preached at
St. Paul's Church, Covent-garden,

On the First of March, 17 ^{$\frac{24}{25}$} ,

Before the Honourable
Society of Ancient Britons;

Establish'd in Honour of
Her ROYAL HIGHNESS's Birth-Day,

AND THE
Principality of WALES.

By JOHN HARRIS Dean of St. Buryan,
and Clerk of the Closet to His ROYAL
HIGHNESS the Prince of WALES.

L O N D O N : 

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T O
His ROYAL HIGHNESS
GEORGE Prince of *Wales*,
President of the
Honourable Society of Ancient *Britons*;

A N D T O

The Right Honourable the
Earl of *Sutherland*,
The Right Honourable the
Lord Viscount *Gage*,
Sir *Arthur Owen* Bar.
Sir *Nicholas Carew* Bar.
William Morgan of *Trede-*
gar Esq.

William Owen Esq;
Thomas Morgan of *Ruper-*
ra Esq;
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James Nansmith Esq;
Roger Lort Esq;
Sir *Thomas Master* Knt.

Stewards of the S O C I E T Y ;

A N D T O

The Right Reverend Father in GOD, *William*
Lord Bishop of *Bangor*, Almoner ;

A N D T O

Sir *Thomas Jones* Knt. Treasurer, and Secretary ;

This SERMON is most humbly Dedicated!



At a Sitting of the Stewards of the Society of Ancient Britons, establisb'd in Honour to the Birth-Day of Her Royal Highness the Princess, and the Principality of Wales, had the 1st of March, 17 ^{$\frac{24}{5}$} ,

Ordered,

THAT Sir *John Austen* Bar. Representative of the Right Honourable the Earl of *Sutherland*, the first Steward, do give the Thanks of this *Society* to the Reverend Mr. Dean *Harris*, for the Excellent SERMON preached by him on this Day, before this *Society*; and that Sir *John Austen* do make it the Request of this *Society*, that the same be Printed.

Tho. Jones Secretary.





I COR. ii. 15.

But he that is Spritual, judgeth all Things, yet he himself is judged of no Man.



THE Meaning of the *Text* I take to be as follows; *He that is Spritual* discerneth *the Things that be of the Spirit of God*: But the Doctrines which he believes or utters concerning those *Things*, are not discerned by any *Man* that is not *Spritual*; that is, not by the *Natural Man*, of whom it is said, in the Verse immediately preceding, That he *receiveth not the Things that be of the Spirit of God*: for they are Foolishness to him.

This was said by the *Apostle*, at a time when the *Spirit of God* was poured forth extraordinarily. Now the *Text* holds as true under the ordinary Dispensation of Grace, as at the time when endited by the *Apostle*. At present, as well as then, the *Natural Man*, or one govern'd by his Appetites, and Passions, and di-

rected by *Carnal Views*, shall *hear or read* the Things of God, and not *discern them*; but will either reject them without Reason, or receive them with Prejudice, or else pervert them to a *reprobate Sense*.

Such Men abandoning that Divine Source of *Truth* and *Knowledge* which we find in the Gospel, shall wander blindfold to the *Law*, and the *Prophets*, to seek for *Christ*; And after their Enquiry in *those Sacred Writings*, say, That there is no *Christ*; Or they shall affirm, with the *Jews*, That *Christ* has not yet appear'd; or else maintain, as at other times they do, That *Christ* was a *Temporal Prince*, and that he has already appear'd, and *now sleeps with his Fathers*.

But it is no wonder, that *Christ* is not to be found by those Men, in the *Law*, or the *Prophets*; for, in truth, they read *those Sacred Writings* very much disqualify'd to *profit* by them, as the *Natural Man*, in the Verse preceding the *Text*, is describ'd to be; having no other Design, than to endeavour to prove, That he is not to be found in them. And it is with this View, that they pretend to explain certain *Prophecies*; while they want the proper Dispositions to find out, and embrace Truth, and are unfit for the Assistance of the *Spirit*, which never enters into *unrighteous Souls*.

'Tis owing to this perverse Conduct, that those Men conclude, that *Christ* is not to be found, in the *Prophecies*, except in Figure or Allegory; and have alledged some Texts, by which they pretend to prove that Inference; but principally that of the Virgin's Conception, *Isa. 7. 14.* which they positively maintain to have no other Relation to the Conception, than what is made out by an Allegory. And indeed, it is by such positive Assertions, that they

they would persuade Men, that there are no Texts at all in *Scripture* which literally or originally concern our *Saviour*; suppressing, as it were, the *Literal Prophecies*, in order to represent the Allegorical, or Figurative, as the only Foundation of our Faith; insinuating thereby, that the Christian Religion is destitute of a solid Basis.

But being, it seems, conscious of the Weakness of what they so inconsiderately assert, and how little the *Scriptures* favour their Sentiments, they have recourse to another kind of Aid, taken from the Prejudices of a certain Modern *Jew*; who likewise says, that there are no *Prophecies* in *Scripture*, which directly and literally concern the *Messias*.

Now, here also, they betray their want of Sincerity; or else shew, that they read the *Scriptures*, with a Design to overlook, or contradict what they contain: For whatever may be the Opinion of a Modern *Jew*, with respect to this Matter, we have the Testimony of three *Evangelists* to prove, that the *Jews* themselves, in our *Saviour's* Time, look'd upon the 110th *Psalms*, as a direct and literal Prediction of the *Messias*.

Mat. 23.
41.
Mark 12.
25.
Luke 20.
41.

And it appears likewise, without Question, that the following *Prophecy* is of the same kind. When the *Jews* ask'd one another how the *Messias* could arise from *Galilee*; it was answer'd from *Micah* 5. 2. that *Christ* was to come out of the *Seed of David*, and out of the Town of *Bethlehem*, where *David* was; which the Event prov'd to be a *Literal Prophecy*.

John 7.
41, 42.

'Tis likewise owing to the same Disposition of Heart and Mind, that they trifle with, and misrepresent the Sense of certain *Texts* in the *Acts of the Apostles*, affirming from those Places, that the *Gen-*

tile (by which term, they understand the *Idolater*,) was allured to *Christianity* by Allegorical Explications of the *Prophets*; to which kind of Reasoning they were accustomed before their Conversion, whilst they follow'd their own Superstition.

Whereas, on the contrary, it is certain, that no *Idolaters* upon Record, have been Converted by that sort of Explication; for the only Instances of Converted *Idolaters* we meet with, are the following;
 Acts 13. 8. *Sergius Paulus*, the Jayler of *Philippi*, and *Dionysius*,
 & 16. 30. and *Damaris*, with some others of *Athens*. Now
 & 17. 34. the two first were Converted by *Miracles*; and the latter, by Believing, through a *special Grace*, that *Christ* was risen from the Dead; therefore the *Idolaters*, whose Conversion is particularly mentioned in the *Sacred Records*, were not Converted to *Jesus*, by Allegorical Explications of the *Prophecies*.

At length those Men, after having used such Arguments as have been now mentioned, to shew that no Promise of the *Messias* can be made out but by Allegory, proceed to assert, (if any Thing fix'd or certain can be drawn from what they offer,) That in order to be a *Christian*, a Man is to understand the *Scriptures* Allegorically, and to take them in that Sense only; whereupon they sum up their Notions of *Christianity*, and define the term *Christianity*, by calling it, *Mystick Judaism*; and a *Christian*, a *Mystick Jew*: without apprehending, that these words *Mystick Judaism*, and *Mystick Jew*, are so far from bearing the Sense which they give 'em, that they are almost as little to the Purpose, as any two words they could think of.

A *Jew* is a Person living under the Rule or Law of *Moses*; to which if you add the word *Mystick*, and take it in their own Sense, it will signify

signify a *Jew*, who applies the *Prophecies* to *Jesus*: Therefore, a *Mystick Jew* is a Person observing the Law of *Moses*, who applies the *Prophecies* to *Jesus*; that is, a *Mystick Jew*, is a *Judaizing Christian*, or one who thinks himself oblig'd to observe the Rule of *Moses*, as well as that of *Christ*; or, as the *Apostle* expresses it, who thought himself not to be compleat in *Christ*. This, and this alone, is the true Sense of the word *Jew*, with the Addition or Epithet of *Mystick*; and whatever Epithet may be apply'd to the word *Jew*, whether *Mystick*, or any other, this may be always taken for granted, that the word *Jew* can never be understood to denote a Person who does not think himself bound to conform to the Law of *Moses*; for the Observance of that Law is Essential to the Idea of a *Jew*; and therefore a Man that observes it not, and judgeth himself not obliged to it, (which is the Case of a *Christian*,) cannot, without a Contradiction, be call'd a *Jew*. Colos. 2.
10.

But these being their main Errours, viz. That *Christ* is not to be found in the *Prophecies*, except in *Figure* or *Allegory*; and that both *Jew* and *Gentile* were converted to *Christianity* by Allegorical Explications of the *Prophecies*; and that Carnal or Sensual Men (as such) are capable of being proper Interpreters of the *Prophecies*, and attaining to the full and perfect Meaning of them, with Regard to the Divine Knowledge, which they convey to us concerning *Christ*, in an equal Degree, and with equal Certainty and Authority, with the Divine Persons, who were sent into the World, with an express Commission, and the most astonishing and undeniable Credentials to explain those Heavenly Oracles: These, I say, being their Fundamental

damental Errors, I shall consider them, with their Attendants, in the Sequel of my Discourse, and prove them to be imprudent and groundless; and the Method I shall use in doing it, shall be by reducing what I have to say thereupon, to the two following Propositions; and shewing,

- I. *First*, That Men were not converted to *Christianity*, or brought to a full and compleat Knowledge of *Christ*, ev'n from the *Prophecies* themselves *alone*; much less, by such *Allusive Sayings*, as those Men call *Allegory*, and *Prophecies Allegoriz'd*.
- II. *Secondly*, That in order to our attaining a compleat Knowledge of *Christ*, from the *Prophecies*, we are to understand them, as interpreted by Holy Men, who gave evident Proofs, that in applying these *Predictions to Christ*, they were guided by the same *Spirit of God*, which *dictated* or *utter'd* them.
- I. *First*, Men were not converted to *Christianity*, or brought to a full and compleat Knowledge of *Christ*, ev'n from the *Prophecies* themselves *alone*; much less, by such *Allusive Sayings*, as those Men call *Allegory*, and *Prophecies Allegoriz'd*.

To prove this first Point, I shall observe, That *Christ* had been foretold and described in the *Prophecies*, under three *Characters*: He was represented as a *Man of Sorrows*, and acquainted with Grief; He was to be a *Saviour or Deliverer of the People*; and He was likewise expected, as a *Prophet*. Now from these *Characters* Men did not attain to a compleat

Isa. 53. 3.

Pl. 89. 27.

Deut. 18.

15.

pleat Knowledge of *Christ* ; consequently Men were not converted to *Christ*, by the *Prophecies alone*.

They did not attain to that Knowledge, from the *Character*, which represented him *as a Man of Sorrows* ; because it does not seem, that at the time of his Appearance, it was own'd, that this *Character* belong'd to the *Messias* : and the Reason, that it was not acknowledged to relate to him, is accounted for in the following Manner.

At the Time our *Saviour* appear'd, the *Pharisaical* Notion of a *Temporal, Glorious, and Triumphant Deliverer*, was deeply rooted in the Minds of the People ; their Understandings were dazzl'd with the Prospects of Victory and Triumph ; they fasten'd their Attention *solely* on such Objects : And tho' the Enchantment had begun its Operation long before, yet it had never so powerful an Influence upon them, as at this Period, when they knew that the Accomplishment of *the Promise* approach'd, and when their Temporal Distresses engag'd them beyond measure in the Expectation of a Temporal Deliverance. Wherefore they either altogether overlook'd the *Prophecies* under present Consideration, being so contrary to their Hopes and Desires ; or rejected and suppress'd them, as *ungrateful Predictions, injurious* to the Publick Welfare ; which, in Cases of like nature, had been an ancient and not uncommon Practice among that People : of which the two following *Texts* afford a remarkable Evidence : *And the King of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, There is yet one Man (Micaiah the Son of Imlah) by whom we may enquire of the Lord ; but I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.* The second is taken out of the Predictions of *Jeremy*, where it is recorded, that

¹ Kings
22. 8.

that the People answer'd him in this manner ;
 Jer. 44. 16. *As for the Word, that thou hast spoken to us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee.*

Now, by reason of the same Disposition of Mind, the *Jews*, cotemporary with our Saviour, were so far from coming at a compleat Knowledge of *Christ*, from his Character, as a *suffering Messias* ; that ev'n after the *Predictions*, which denoted it, were explain'd, and appropriated by the *Voice of Angels*, the *Preaching of Inspired Persons*, and confirm'd by their *Martyrdoms*, and *Miracles*, they gave them no Attention, consider'd in their true Application.

Secondly, Men were not converted to *Christianity*, or had no compleat Knowledge of *Christ*, from his Character, as a *Saviour*, or *Deliverer* of the People.

It must be confess'd, that it seems solely owing to the *Evil Disposition of Men*, that they did not make some near *Approaches* towards finding out the Meaning of *those Terms*, and attaining to the Knowledge of the *Nature and Prerogatives* of their *Deliverer* ; for it is *clearly and solemnly* express'd in *Scripture*, That the *Kingdom*, which that *Deliverer*, or *King*, was to establish and govern, was to be *Everlasting* ; and therefore, they might have observ'd, that he was Characteriz'd, with respect to his Empire or Dominion, very differently from other Kings : And as this Difference imply'd a State of Eminence and Superiority above the Monarchs of the Earth, they might have from thence perceiv'd his peculiar and exalted Nature.

I shall

I shall here mention some few of the Texts, that Characteriz'd this Kingdom in a different manner from other Kingdoms: — *His Dominion is an Everlasting Dominion, which shall not pass away, and his Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed; — it was never to be destroyed, — but to stand for Ever; — the Saints of the most High were to take it, and to possess it for Ever, ev'n for Ever and Ever.* — Now the words *Everlasting Dominion; a Kingdom that shall not pass away, nor be destroyed; that shall subsist for Ever, ev'n for Ever and Ever;* bearing a Sense, which is absolutely incompatible with the Nature of any Temporal or Worldly Government whatsoever: And the Promises which are here made, being not to be understood of a Succession of Temporal Princes; for the Temporal Glory of *Judah*, as well as of *Israel*, was already done away: I say, considering the words whereby this Kingdom is describ'd, and the Period of Time, when those *Prophecies* were utter'd, it must needs be understood, that the Dominion here spoken of, could not relate to the Temporal OEconomy of that People; and moreover, that it was not temporary, perishable, or subject to change, as Worldly Dominions are; and consequently, that the Ruler or Governor of this Kingdom, could not be a Mortal or Temporal Prince.

But this People being intirely under the Byas of Carnal Passions, and observing, that those, who were call'd *Saviours*, in *Scripture*, were understood to be Temporal Kings, or Leaders of Armies, were misled to take that Word in the same Sense, with respect to Him *that was to come*; and to overlook or misapply those Texts which might have directed 'em to the true Meaning of it. To which Error, it

Dan. 17. 4.

18. 22, 27.

Obad.

ver. 21.

2 Kings

13. 5.

seems, some other *Allusive* Descriptions of the *Messias* contributed ; as, when he is said to be a *Star*, or a
 Numb. 27. ^{17.} *Scepter*, or spoken of in *Similitude*, as an *Enlarger*
 Isa. 54. 3. *of their Borders*, or an *Ensign of the People* ; as,
 Isa. 2. 20. when he is shadow'd under the *Stile* of a *Governour*,
 Jerem. 30. and a *Conqueror* ; and, tho' he was *more worthy of*
^{21.} *Honour than Moses*, was represented, in a *Figure*,
 Zechar. to be like unto *Moses*, who had been a *Leader*
 10. 11. of *Armies*, and stil'd a *King in Jeshurun*. Now
 Deut. 18. the *Jews*, who took these Sayings *Literally*, did
^{15.} Deut. 33. 5. not apply them to the meek and lowly *Jesus* ; to
 a Person, who, when he was ask'd the *Question*,
 whether the *State* was *Tributary*, or not, declin'd
 Mat. 22. to answer to it ; and avoided to decide an *Affair*
^{21.} of *private Right*, declaring against any *Pretence* of
 his being a *Judge* or *Divider* ; and was so far from
 Luke 12. enlarging the *Jewish Dominions*, that he himself
^{14.} had not where *to lay his Head*.
 Mat. 8. 20.

Those were the Reasons, why the *Jews* did not attain the Knowledge of *Christ*, from these *Prophecies*. From which I shall observe, That it is so far from being true, that the *Jews* were induc'd by *Allegory*, to embrace the *Christian Religion* ; that it is owing to such *Figures* of Speech, that their *Hearts* were alienated from it : For this People, carnally explaining the *Prophecies* of the *Everlasting Kingdom* of the *Messias*, as *Metaphorical* ; and the above-mentioned, which represent Him as a *King*, as *Literal* ; instead of receiving, have rejected *Christianity*, thro' the *Power* of *Allusive Expressions*. Tho' now it be said, by those that espouse their Cause, that it is *Christianity*, and not the *Expectation* of the *Jews*, that is founded on *Allegory*.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Men were not converted to *Christianity*, or did not attain to a compleat Knowledge of *Christ*, from his Character, as a *Prophet*.

It must, indeed, be acknowledg'd, that when the *Jews* saw his mighty Works, they said, that *a* ^{Luke 7.16.} *great Prophet was risen amongst them*. But this favourable Opinion they entertain'd of Him, and the Impression made upon them, by the *Miracles* he wrought, were of no long Duration: For perceiving that he did not come among them as a King, attended with Splendour, Pomp, and Majesty, ^{Luke 17. 20.} as they expected the *Messias* would appear, they soon changed their Opinion, and recover'd from the Astonishment they were under, at the sight of his *Miracles*; their Surprise insensibly lessen'd, and and at length wore off, and that, to such a degree, that instead of receiving him as the *Messias*, they ^{John 10. 20.} would not so much as acknowledge that He came from God.

It is probable, that this Evil Disposition of Mind was aim'd at by the three first *Evangelists*, when they spake of the Effects which our *Saviour's Miracles* produc'd in those that beheld them; for they chose to express those Impressions, by saying only, ^{Mat. 12. 33.} that *Men were astonish'd*; or, that *Men wonder'd* ^{Mark 5. 42.} *greatly*, or said, *We have seen strange Things to Day*; ^{7. 37.} or they describe them in Words of like Import, but ^{11. 18.} without saying, that *Men believed*. ^{Luke 4. 33.} ^{5. 11, 26.} ^{7. 16. 8.} ^{56. 9. 43.}

And this Observation is not weaken'd, by what we find on the same Subject in St. *John*, who speaking of our *Saviour's Miracles*, constantly says, that at the ^{John 2. 11,} sight of 'em, *Men did believe*; for St. *John* differs ^{23. 4. 40.} from the *others*, only with respect to the sound of the ^{7. 31. 11.} ^{45. 12. 42.}

word *Believe*, and not to the meaning of that Term. The *Evangelist* not implying, when he saith, that *Men believ'd*, that they were converted to *Christianity*, or attain'd a compleat Knowledge of *Christ*, at the sight of his *Prophetical Works*; but that they believ'd his *Mission* from God; which for the most part, was only a *transient Acknowledgement* of him; for we find in the same *Evangelist*, that ev'n many, who were called his *Disciples*, notwithstanding his *mighty Works*, were so far from being converted to him, or compleatly knowing him, that they would not receive his *Doctrines*, when he spake to them, *about eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood*, but went back, and walked no more with him: Tho' his *Unction*, (as well as his *Mission*,) was plainly shewn by his *Works* in a *sufficient Degree*; His *Miracles* being in themselves, the first Argument to prove him not only a *Prophet*, but *Messias the King*; according to the Order of *Belief*, which is clearly laid down by our Saviour himself; *The Works* (saith he,) *that I do, bear Witness of me, that the Father hath sent me*, John 5. 36. and then it is subjoyn'd, ver. 39. *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have Eternal Life, and they are they, that testify of me*. He offers therefore, two Reasons for the *Jews* receiving him; but the first is drawn from his *Works*.

I have said above, that notwithstanding Men acknowledged *Jesus* to be a *Prophet*, when they saw his *Works*, they yet forsook and renounced him, when they consider'd, that he did not appear with the Majesty, and Train of a King; I shall here add, that this fatal Errour of expecting the *Messias*, as a King, had such an Influence ev'n on the *Disciples* themselves, that they would not believe

believe in Him, without making this Distinction, that, tho' he was not a King as yet, he might soon assume his Kingdom; resolving their Doubts in general into this, that he whom they believ'd to have been sent by God, could not have been sent to deceive. Wherefore they did not question, but that he would soon verify their Expectation, by some remarkable Act of Royalty; which Hopes were so predominant in them, and so absolutely influenc'd and possess'd their Minds, that when he told them expressly, he should *be condemned to Death, and delivered to the Gentiles*, two of them, (*James and John*) in the very same Instant, requested him, *the one to sit on his Right Hand, and the other on his Left in his Glory*: I say, in the very same Instant, for so it appears to be, by the Order and Connexion, in which this Matter is related, by the two *Evangelists* who mention it, *St. Matthew* John 9. 33. 38. Mat. 20. 20. and *St. Mark*. Mar. 10. 35.

What I have hitherto offer'd, under my general Head, concerns the *Jew* only, and shews, that he was not converted to *Christianity*, or did not attain to a compleat Knowledge of *Christ*, in the *Prophecies* alone. I shall now say a Word or two, with Regard to the *Heathen*; and shew, that they were in no Degree brought to the Profession of *Christ*, by Citations out of the *Old Testament*, or by *Prophecy Allegoriz'd*, as has been of late maintained with great Temerity.

What mis-led Men to this *Affertion*, was, it seems, their Identifying the Sense of different Words, or making Terms to signify one and the same Idea, which really stand for two different Idea's; for Instance, they say, that *St. Peter* converted *Corneilius* by Citations out of the *Prophets*; from whence they

they conclude, That since this Person was a *Gentile*, and thus converted, (as they say,) the *Heathen* or *Idolater* were gain'd over to *Christ* by the same Means. Here they substitute the Sense of the words *Heathen* or *Idolater*, to the Meaning of the word *Gentile*, contrary to the Signification of this Word, with respect to the Person, to whom it is applied. For it is said of *Cornelius*, that he

Afts 10. 2. was a devout Man, and prayed to God continually; which shews, that this *Gentile* was no *Idolater*, but a *Jewish Profelyte*. Wherefore they reason wrong, who conclude, that the *Heathen* or *Idolater* were converted to *Christianity*, by Arguments drawn from the *Prophets*, because *Cornelius* was brought over to it by such Arguments; (supposing it to be true, that he was so.) And indeed, we do not find, that the Conversion of any *Heathen* was attempted in that manner, which is a Matter, I have already spoken of in the beginning of my Discourse; wherein I have shewn, That among the *Heathens*, *Sergius Paulus*, the Jayler of *Philippi*, and *Dionysius* and *Damaris*, with some others of *Athens*, are the only Examples, of whose Conversion we have any particular Account; and it does not appear, that those Persons were mov'd to believe by the Citation of *Prophecies*.

Nay, when we read ev'n of the *Baptism* of an *Heathen*, we do not find, that he was so much

Afts 16. 30. as inform'd, that *Christ* had been foretold in the *Prophets*. The Person I mean, is the above-mentioned Jayler of *Philippi*, the only *Heathen*, whose *Baptism* we have any Account of in the *New Testament*. This *Heathen Convert* observing a miraculous Earthquake, and other surprizing Proofs of the Favour of God, to the two Apostles, he had

in

in his Custody, *Paul* and *Silas*, ran to them trembling, and ask'd them, *what he should do to be sav'd?* Ver. 31, 32
 to which, he receiv'd this Answer only, *Believe in the Lord Jesus*. Little more pass'd before his *Baptism*. Something they said to him, touching the *Lord*; but whatever they spake, the Instruction was short; for he, and *all his*, were in the same Hour, and straitway *Baptized*.

Now, if we judge of what was said to this *Heathen* touching *Jesus*, by what we find offer'd to another *Heathen*, upon the like Occasion, in the next Chapter, it will appear, that nothing was alledg'd out of the *Prophets*, to convert either the one or the other; for we find in this Chapter, that *Jesus* was preach'd to the *Heathen*, only as Acts 17. 31.
 a Person, whom God had made *Judge of the World*; and the only Assurance there given them of his having receiv'd that Power, is not taken from the *Prophets*, but from this, in that God had rais'd him from the Dead.

Wherefore, I say, if we judge, as we ought in reason to do, of the Conversions that are not recorded, by those that are, we must conclude, that the *Apostles* us'd no Proofs drawn from the *Old-Testament*, for inducing the *Heathen* to believe; tho' the contrary be so surprisingly affirm'd.

But tho' we should go beyond our Warrant, and suppose, that the *Apostles* told this Man, before his *Baptism*, That *Jesus* had been revealed in the *Prophets*; and that they had open'd the other *Mysteries* of our Redemption to him, in this short Time: 'Tis expressly contrary to the words of the *Text*, to say, that he was converted, only by being instructed in those *Prophecies* or *Mysteries*; since he ran to the *Apostles*, to ask them what he should

should do to be sav'd, before his receiving the Instruction, or being initiated into the *Mysteries*. It is therefore evident, that he believ'd upon the Ground of the *Miracle*, and not thro' the Influence of the *Word*, that was spoken to him, whatever was the Instruction conveyed by that *Word*.

This is what I had to offer, under my first general Head; wherein I have prov'd, against rash and inconsiderate Men; *First*, That the *Jews* were not converted to *Christianity*, ev'n from the *Prophecies alone*; much less by *Allegory* or *Prophecy*, or *Texts of Scripture*, *Allegoriz'd*. And, *Secondly*, That the *Heathen*, or *Idolater* were so far from being converted by the one or the other, that it does not appear, that in order to their Conversion, they were so much as inform'd, that *Christ* was at all foretold in the *Prophets*. I proceed now to my second general Head, under which. I am to shew,

- II. *Secondly*, That to attain a compleat Knowledge of *Christ*, from the *Prophecies*, we are to understand them, as interpreted by *Holy Men*, who gave evident Proofs, that in applying these *Prophecies* to *Christ*, they were guided by the same *Spirit of God*, which *dictated* or *utter'd* them. *Holy Martyrs*, who, in imparting the meaning of the *Prophecies*, do not consider them *abstractedly* from their Accomplishment, but as explain'd and fixt by the *Event of Things*; who have given Assurance, that the *hidden Mysteries* revealed to them, were as far beyond the Limits of *Human Knowledge*, as the *visible Works* or *Miracles* wrought by them, exceeded the reach of *Human Power*.

1 Cor. 2.
10.

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Without such *divine* Expositors, we had not attain'd a *compleat* Knowledge of *Christ*, or of the *true* or *full* Meaning of several of the *Prophecies*, which relate to him, or the *OEconomy* of his *Mission*; many Truths, which are *Articles* of Faith, or the *Riches* of his *Glory*, had been hid from us. But this will appear from the following *Texts*.

The first I shall mention, is that in *Isaiah* 53. 7. *He was led as a Lamb to the Slaughter, and as a Sheep before her Shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his Mouth.* Now this *Prophecy* directly related to our *Saviour*; and yet the *Ethiopian Eunuch*, mention'd in *Acts* 8. 27. could not understand it, tho' he read the *Scriptures*, 'till *Philip* guided him, and rescu'd the true Meaning of the *Text*, from the *Glosses* of the *Cotemporary Jews*.

The second *Text* I shall produce, is in *Psalms* 69. 25. *Let his Habitation be Desolate, and no Man dwell therein.* This is a *Text*, the *Prophetick* Meaning of which was never understood, 'till *Simon-Peter*, by a particular Inspiration of the *Spirit*, which we read of, *Luke* 24. 45. and which happen'd between the *Resurrection*, and the *Feast of Pentecost*, reveal'd, that it related to the *Traitor Judas*. And we further learn from the same *Apostle*, in the same Place, that *David* had *prophecy'd* of *Judas*, that he should betray our *Lord*, in two other *Psalms*; which *Prophecies*, notwithstanding, were not understood, ^{*Psal.* 41. 9.} & ^{*109.* 8.} 'till they were then explain'd.

Soon afterwards, the same *Apostle*, at the *Feast of Pentecost*, enter'd, as it were, into the *Holy of Holies*, and shew'd how sundry *Prophets* had afore-time spoken of the *Miracle* of that Day. He likewise reveal'd, at the same time, that *David* had

foretold the *Resurrection*, in these words of the 16th Psalm, ver. 10. *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell; neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see Corruption*; that is, that *Christ* was to rise from the Grave within the number of Hours, or before the Time that Bodies begin to Change.

This *Text* plainly foretold our *Saviour's Resurrection*; and yet was not understood in that Sense, 'till the *Apostle* revealed its true Meaning. Besides, it answers, along with other *Texts*, a frivolous Question, that has been lately started, to the Prejudice of Religion, viz. In what *Scripture* is it foretold, that our *Saviour* was to rise from the Dead the third Day? since it is foretold in this *Text*. For if the Anointed of God was to be cut off, and yet not to see *Corruption*, then he must have risen from the Grave, as effectually he did, before the Contexture of his Body could have suffer'd that Alteration.

It is likewise, from the same *Divine Source* alone, that we learn the true Meaning of the *Prophecy* foretelling the miraculous Conception, viz. *Behold, a Virgin conceiving, and bringing forth a Son, and shall call his Name Emmanuel*; for we might not have apply'd this *Prophecy* to *Christ*, if St. *Matthew* had not gone before us in it.

But, as concerning this *Prophecy*, the deluded Unbelievers I have already mention'd, give us here another Specimen of their Temerity: For imagining that this *Text* is made a Foundation of the *Christian Religion*, they joyn with the *Jews*, and imprudently assert, that it literally and originally meant the Son of the *Prophet*, mention'd in the beginning of the next Chapter, and was only, by Allegory, applied to our *Saviour*.

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This *Hypothesis* has been often confuted, and with so much the less Difficulty, as it seems, that the Child spoken of in the *Text*, could not be the Son of the *Prophet*; since that Child, mention'd in the *Text*, is called *Emmanuel*; but in the next Chapter, *Emmanuel* is stil'd a Prince, in these Words, *The stretching of the* Iſa. 8. 8. *Wings of Assyria, shall fill the Breadth of thy Land, O Emmanuel.* Wherefore, the Child here spoken of, could not be the Son of the *Prophet*; since the Son of the *Prophet*, was no Prince, or Sovereign, to whom the Land might be said to belong.

In the next place, it is probable, that the Son of the *Prophet*, could not be meant in this *Text*, because he was call'd by a *Name*, which differs from the word *Emmanuel*, both in Sound and Signification: And yet, contrary to the Sound and Sense of the Names, those Men affirm *absolutely*, that *Emmanuel* was a Son of the *Prophet*, without undertaking to solve this, or other Objections, attending their Assertion, by any Arguments; not ev'n by *those*, which are commonly offer'd for that Purpose; or taking Notice, whilst they appeal to the *Jews*, that two Parts in three of them are of a different Opinion; some of them maintaining, that the Son here mention'd, was *Hezekiah* the Son or Successor of *Abaz*, who, after the Death of *Abaz*, was King of the Land. But this Opinion can no more be supported than the former; that Prince being at this time, Fifteen or Sixteen Years of Age, or at least, of an Age, to discern Good from Evil. Others of them say, that it was an Infant Son of King *Abaz*; but this Opinion, likewise, is as improbable as each of the other: For, 1st, it is not mention'd in *Scripture*, that the King had any such Son. But 2^{dly}, If he had, it does not appear, that he ever was

*Maher-sha-
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King of the Country ; consequently, it cannot be said of him, that *the stretching of the Wings of Assyria, should fill the breadth of his Land.*

But tho' those Men differ in Opinion from the greatest part of the *Jews*, touching the Child mention'd in the *Text* before us ; yet they affirm, with the *Jews* in general, That 'twere *absurd* to apply this *Prophecy* to the *Messias*, who was not to be born, 'till Seven Hundred Years after ; since the Child therein mention'd, was a Sign given to the King, of a Deliverance at Hand.

Vid. Calvin.
supr. loc.

To which I answer, *First*, That *Learned Men* have asserted, that the Child here mention'd, was not given as a Sign to the King, but to the House of *David*, to whom solely, the *Prophet* seems to address himself ; *Hear ye now, ye House of David, is it a small Thing for you to weary Men, but will ye weary my God also ? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a Sign, Behold, a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his Name Emmanuel : And their Opinion appears to be well supported by the Context, as well as the Text.*

Exod. 3.
12.

But, *Secondly*, Supposing the Promise to have been made to the King, yet still these positive Men, will never be able to prove, that by the word *Sign*, in this Place, is understood the *previous* Mark of an Event afterwards to ensue. For the word *Sign* is found in *Scripture*, contrary to this ordinary Use of the *term*, to stand for some Transaction differing from, and consequent upon the main Event, directly express'd in the *Promise* or *Prophecy*. As for Example, when God gave *Moses* his Message to *Pharaoh*, he told him, *this shall be a Token to thee, that I have sent thee : When thou hast brought forth my People out of Egypt, ye shall serve God up-*

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on this Mountain. Where, it is plain, that the word *Token* or *Sign*, (which in the *Original*, is ^{Sept. Alex. σημεῖον} ^{& Rom. Vulgar. Signum.} stands for a Matter of Fact, which really happen'd after the Accomplishment of the main Event, and not for any *Prognostick* of it.

And since it apparently does so, I take it as a Precedent for me to follow; and therefore say, that as the Worship, which the Children of *Israel* were to pay to God on the Mountain of *Horeb*, after their Deliverance, was to be a Sign of that very Deliverance to *Moses*; so the word *Sign* in the *Text* under Consideration, does likewise stand for a Matter of Fact, not *previous*, but subsequent to the promised Event or Deliverance. Those therefore, who assert, with the *Jews*, That it is *absurd* to say, that a Child to be born, which was to happen 700 Years after, should be the *Sign* of an Event, which was to happen within the Space of Two or Three Years, would do well to consider, (since they acknowledge the *Prophet* to have been * divinely inspir'd; and consequently, * *Grounds,* the *Scriptures* to be the *Word* of God,) that God &c. p. 43. has himself expressly *transposed* the *Sign*, and made it follow the Event, whereof it was a *Sign*, in speaking of the Deliverance out of *Egypt*. And therefore, it may not be *absurd*, that the word *Sign*, in the Case before us, be also understood, as subsequent to the present Deliverance.

But to pass by those vain Attempts which have been made, to prove, That this *Text* was not intended, *singly and solely*, to foretel the Incarnation;

I shall here observe to you, That my chief Design, in taking Notice of this *Text*, relating to the Conception, is to shew these two Things, in Opposi-

position to the Glosses of *Carnal Men*. *First*, That they have not prov'd, That the *Child* here spoken of, who was to be conceiv'd of a Virgin, was a Son of the *Prophet*. *Secondly*, That it is not *absurd*, (in the Case of a *divine Promise*) that the *Sign* of a future Event, should be said to be subsequent to the Event itself: It seeming to be a manner of *Speech* peculiar to *God*, on whom all Events *depend*; implying, that when it pleaseth Him to promise, and yet he does not give the Assurance of a *previous Pledge* or *Sign* to confirm it, the Execution of the Promise is equally certain, without the *previous Sign* or Pledge.

This only was my Intention, without meaning to determine whether the *Prophecy* before us, be *Literal* or *Typical*; whether it was singly intended, as a Prediction of the *Messias*, or whether it might not intermediately relate to another Event.

And if what I have said may seem to denote, that my Intention was to prove the former, I disown my having any such meaning: I shall never at least, undertake to decide *absolutely* upon such Questions. This Liberty I leave to *Carnal Men*; the Priviledge of seeming to know what has not been yet reveal'd, and is on all sides enclos'd in Darkness. *Oh! Why do People thus imagine a vain thing against the Lord, and against his Anointed?*

I shall likewise here observe, with regard to its being uncertain, whether this *Prophecy* be *Typical*; or *Express* and *Literal*: That since, the *Evangelist St. Matthew* has left this Question undecided, and yet quoted this *Prophecy*, as pointing out our *Saviour*; it may be inferred, that it is not necessary for Men to know, under which Class
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this *Prophecy* is to be ranged; and that we are left at Liberty to maintain, that it is either *Typical*, or *Literal*, according as the one, or the other Opinion appears to us, the most probable.

Agreeably hereunto, some Divines, treating of it, have offer'd Arguments to prove it to be *Typical*, and others *Literal*, according to the differing Opinions of Men: And a pious and learned Prelate has lately said, in favour of the latter, that the *Prophet* spake in this *Prophecy* of two different Persons, tho' there be no apparent Transition from one to the other, in Words. That the Part of the *Prophecy* quoted by St. *Matthew*, *Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bring forth a Son, and his Name shall be called Emmanuel*, is capable of being interpreted solely of the *Messias*: And the other Part, * not mentioned by St. *Matthew*, of a Child of the *Prophet* then present, who had not yet attain'd the Age of refusing the Evil, and chusing the Good; accommodating the Age of this Child to this latter part of the *Prophecy*, with great Chronological Accuracy.

Whether this Opinion may not deserve a greater Strefs, than this eminent Author lays upon it, I shall not undertake to decide: But I shall here observe, in Confirmation of it, that the Method of denoting different Things or Persons in the same Place, without specifying the Transition in Words, is exemplify'd in a Passage of *Nahum*, chap. i. ver. 13, 14, 15. where the *Prophet* speaks to two

* *Butter and Honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the Evil, and chuse the Good; for before the Child shall know to refuse the Evil, and chuse the Good, the Land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her Kings.*

different Persons, whilst he seems to direct his Discourse to one only : *For now saith the Lord, in his Mercy to his People, I will break his Yoke from off thee, and will burst thy Bonds in sunder.*

These Words the Lord spake to *Judah* ; but the Words immediately following, relate to the *Ninevites* ; yet still seeming to be a continu'd Discourse to *Judah* : *The Lord hath given a Commandment concerning thee, that no more of thy Name be sown : And in the next Verse, the Prophet applies himself again to Judah ; Oh, Judah, keep thy solemn Feasts, perform thy Vows, for the Wicked shall no more pass thro' thee ; he is utterly cut off.*

Somewhat like this, is the manner of the *Prophets*, when they unexpectedly interrupt the thread of their Discourse, and again as suddenly reassume it, without regarding the *intermediate* Subject. This is observable in *Isaiab*, when in the 8th Chapter, there is a sudden Address to *Emmanuel*, who had not been mentioned, from the 14th Verse of the preceding Chapter, to this Place ; and when again, in the 9th Chapter, Verse 6. the *Prophet* is understood to speak of the *same Person*, not only as a *Prodigy*, or *incarnate* of a *Virgin*, but as *Superiour* to *Angels*, *The Almighty God*, *the Everlasting Father*, *the Prince of Peace*.

It now appears from the Whole, 1st. That during *Christ's* Ministry, Men became his *Followers* or *Disciples*, because they saw his *Miracles*, and because of a *general* Knowledge and Expectation, that the *fulness of Time* was come, derived from the *Prophecies*.

2^{dly}, That after his *Resurrection*, he was completely known or reveal'd.

3^{dly}, That

3dly, That this compleat Knowledge of Him, was not owing to the Prophecies alone.

4thly, That the Prophecies concerning Him, with the Attestation and Belief of his Miracles, and Resurrection, did convince Men (*as many as were dispos'd to be sav'd,*) that he was the *Messias*, and fully disclose Him; when these Oracles were interpreted by Holy Persons, who prov'd their being *authoris'd* to explain them, by mighty Signs, and Wonders, and Miracles wrought by them.

5thly, That no Man can prove, that the Prophecy of the Conception is apply'd to Christ, as a *Typical*, and not a *Literal Prediction*; and consequently, that the forming a *main Design* on the Supposition, that it is apply'd to Christ, as a *Typical Prediction*, is remarkably imprudent and absurd.

I shall here close my Discourse, with observing, on my Subject in general, That the Design of it seems agreeable to the *two-fold Solemnity* of this Day, on which *an Army of Martyrs* dy'd for the Faith; And *an Illustrious Princess* was born, whom Heaven design'd to Cherish and Support it. In the one, we behold the Seed of the Faith sown in the Blood of it's Martyrs: In the other, we celebrate a Period of Time, when, suitably to the Prediction of *Isaiah*, the *Faith* was to become the Care and Concern of great Princes; the very same *primitive Faith*, for which those Martyrs sacrific'd their Lives, and of which the Prophet spake in the Spirit. The Interest of which, that Royal Princess, whose Birth is the Subject of the present Festivity, made her early and chiefest Study; shewing, that it was *nourish'd* in her Heart by the Spirit of God: That it was not the Product of Prejudice or Education: That she understood and knew

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how to defend it, and to prefer it in its primitive Simplicity and Truth, (*as once it was delivered to the Saints,*) to the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them.

This Triumph gave just Grounds for *presaging*, that so early a Defender of the Faith, was design'd by Providence, for an Heir of the Crown, to which that glorious Title is annex'd; for that Prince who was already Fam'd for his Probity and Justice, and had given Distinguishing Marks of his great Courage, and seen the Effects of it, at the Head of a *Victorious Army*; and thus, as well by *Moral*, as *Military Vertues*, added Lustre to His High Birth.

The fortunate Omen was verifi'd in a short Space of Time, and its Completion distinguish'd by the greatest Blessings: For as Providence design'd this *Illustrious Pair* for each other, so they became the noblest Examples of *Conjugal Affection*: As God intended them as Parents of the Protestant Succession, so he has enrich'd them with a numerous Issue to support it: The Pledges of our future Security; the Resources of a Family, whose Sovereignty is more Ancient than Records.

Under the deepest Sense of such divine Favours, the Solemnity of this Day is introduc'd with Prayers and Alms-giving (by the Direction of several Noble and Eminent Persons:) Sacrifices, we offer in particular, for the Preservation of the KING: Oblations, in Gratitude due, for the manifold Blessings we enjoy, under His MAJESTY's most Auspicious Government, and the Administration of Those, that are put in Authority under him; Whom our Wise and Gracious Sovereign, entrusted with the Interest of the Crown, because they were known to be Zealous Assertors of the Legal Privileges of the People; a Confidence, which betokens a Disinterested,
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and Magnanimous Prince, and prov'd successful and happy in the Event. How worthy they were of his Royal Choice, the *baneful* Projects of others have testify'd, which had well nigh brought us to utter Ruin: And yet the fatal Disorders of these ensnaring Schemes were so soon rectify'd by the skilful Hands, that undertook the *Cure*, that the Progress of the *Evil* was not swifter than the Influence of the *Remedy*: *Our Heaviness endur'd for a Night, but Joy came in the Morning*; which dawn'd with a *Prognostick*, of farther Advantages, and surprisingly promis'd, that this would be a *Crisis*, for *Diminishing* the *National Debts*, for *Easing* us of these *burthensome* Incumbrances; the *Ungrateful Symbols* of War, ev'n of the most *fortunate*.

After such Affection shewn us by our *Gracious King*, and the many Successes of his Reign; May we offer the most ardent Vows for His Sacred Person; *the Joy of our Glory*; *the Desire of our Eyes*: May we ask of God to prolong his *precious Life*, and to bless him with *Health*: May we pray, that he may Rule over us, and continue to *Adorn* the Crown with equal *Indulgence to his People*, equal *Renown*, and *Prosperity*, for many and many Years. *Amen.*

F I N I S.





